

Message Text

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12
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 IO-13 /084 W
----- 096197

R 200830Z SEP 76
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6402
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CH
SUBJECT: PEKING RETURNS TO NORMAL

REF: PEKING 1863

1. AS OF SEPTEMBER 20, PEKING HAS RETURNED TO
NORMAL FOLLOWING WEEK OF MOURNING FOR CHAIRMAN MAO.
RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO TIEN AN MEN SQUARE WHICH HAD
REMAINED IN FORCE FOR FULL DAY FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 18 CEREMONY
WERE REMOVED DURING NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 19. TRAFFIC NOW FLOWS
UNIMPEDED ALONG CHANG AN STREET AND OTHER APPROACHES TO SQUARE.
PEDESTRIANS CAN BE SEEN PHOTOGRAPHING MEMORIAL WREATHS WHICH
HAVE BEEN LEFT IN FRONT OF TIEN AN MEN. THE ONLY RESTRICTIONS
APPEARS TO BE ACCESS THROUGH THE GATE ITSELF INTO THE
FORBIDDEN CITY.

2. ALTHOUGH BUSINESS AND TRAFFIC ARE BACK TO NORMAL, SIGNS
OF MOURNING STILL ABOUND. PEKING REMAINS BEDECKED WITH BLACK
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AND WHITE MEMORIAL BANNERS PROCLAIMING "EVERLASTING GLORY" TO

THE CHAIRMAN, WHILE THE CHAIN AND SHRUBBERY SURROUNDING THE MARTYRS' MONUMENT ARE STILL FULL OF SMALL WHITE PAPER FLOWERS. BLACK ARMBANDS ARE STILL NEARLY UNIVERSAL, MANY NOW ATTACHED BY MEANS OF A PIN IN THE SHAPE OF A SMALL WHITE PEONY. MAO BUTTONS, SOUVENIRS FROM CULTURAL REVOLUTION DAYS, ARE ALSO VERY MUCH IN VOGUE.

3. THERE ARE SOME SIGNS OF UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE LENGTH OF THE OFFICIAL MOURNING. THE FLAGS AT TIEN AN MEN AND CHUNGNANHAI RESIDENCE COMPOUND WERE BACK UP TO FULL MAST THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 19, BUT MOST OTHER FLAGS REMAIN AT HALF MAST A FULL DAY LATER. (USLO'S FLAG WAS FULL-MASTED THE 19TH). MANY "LONG LIVE CHAIRMAN MAO" SIGNS ARE STILL IN EVIDENCE, ALTHOUGH THIS MAY REFLECT THE PHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES IN REMOVING THESE SIGNS, SOME OF WHICH ARE CONSTRUCTED OF HEAVY STEEL ATOP TALL BUILDINGS.

4. UNLIKE PREVIOUS FUNERALS, THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION WHATSOEVER CONCERNING THE DISPOSAL OF THE CHAIRMAN'S REMAINS. WHILE THE POSSIBILITY OF A LENIN-STYLE MAUSOLEUM HAS GAINED CURRENCY AMONG PEKING'S FOREIGN COMMUNITY, THERE IS AS YET NO PHYSICAL EVIDENCE THAT ANYTHING OF THE SORT IS BEING PLANNED.
GATES

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